

POT-POURRI
OR
MERRY & WISE



By
G. S. H.



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P O T - P O U R R I ;

OR,

MERRY AND WISE

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A BOOK OF VERSE

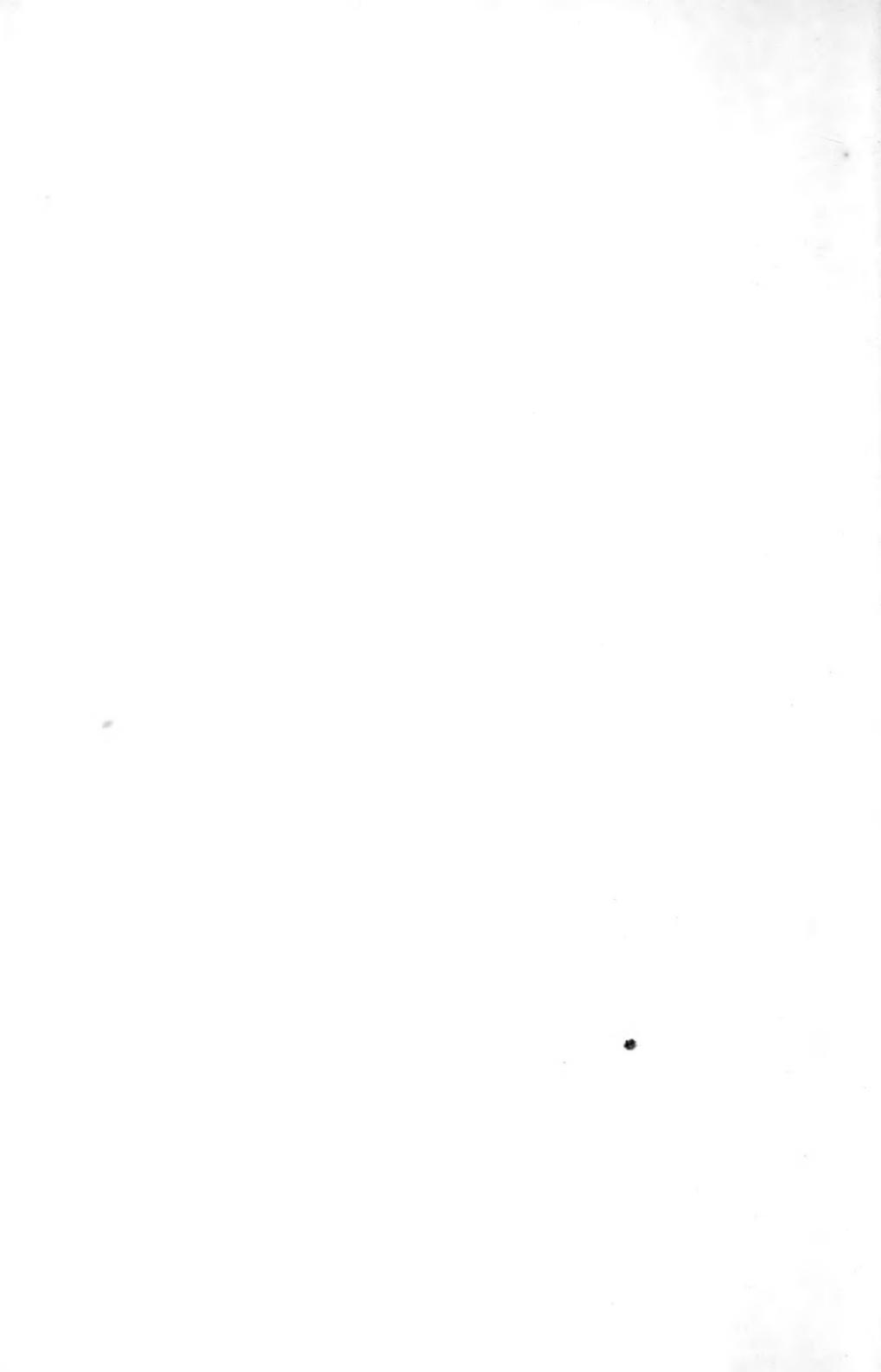
BY

G. S. H.

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1892



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Dedicated
TO
MY BELOVED DAUGHTER
AGNES,
ON HER RETURN FROM AUSTRALIA.

“I have sung many songs,
But never a one so gay.”

LORD TENNYSON.

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P O T - P O U R R I;
OR,
MERRY AND WISE.

CONTRAST.

A BURST of sunshine and an islet blue
To cheer at intervals these cloudy years;
Some merriment to balance sighs and fears;
A wish to doff the normal sombre yew
And masquerade awhile in roseate hue;
A little flame of laughter quench'd in tears;
A changeful mood; the woodland fleck'd by spears
Of ivory moonlight:—This offendeth you?

Then turn where yonder Rainbow spans her arc
Across the frowning forehead of the sky,
With “purfled vest,” and sevenfold grace divine
Compelling every eye. I pray you mark
'Tis born of Contrast: on th' obscurity
Of inky cloud Sun's fiery arrows shine.

VICTORIA—1887.

THE weight of Europe's fairest, heaviest crown,
 Pressed on a maiden brow of eighteen years,
Forced from her eyes a rain of April tears,
Presaging summer suns of bright renown.

Full fifty years since then! Ah, many a blow
 Of heart bereavement, many a gracious thrill
 Of sympathy with all her people's ill,
Hath brimm'd that tearful fount to overflow.

Good Queen, the isolation of a throne
 Cannot unteach thee woman's tenderness,
 Or stay thy pitying hand stretch'd out to bless
Wherever Sorrow's rankling shaft has flown.

Posterity will laud thy blameless reign,
 And own the boon thy healing sceptre brought
 Afar and near: men sobered, children taught,
The brute creation saved from wanton pain,

Extended comforts and diminish'd crime,
A people's rights by patient striving won,
Progressive Freedom 'bravely marching on
Tow'rds consummation in the golden Prime.

Thy subjects hail thee Monarch, Mother, Friend,
Dear for thy sorrows, for thy virtues dear;
Calm be thy future: distant far the year
When thy benignant Sovereignty must end.

THE KING O' LOSTOCK.

WEEP, for the golden years are fled,
The King o' Lostock's gone;
Of all the folk in Lostock bred
This was "the gradeliest mon."

Go climb the slope of Rivington,
Ascend its lofty "Pike,"
In Houghton, Horwich, Adlington
You will not find his like.

In Blackrod, Rumworth, Wingates, Dean,
Spread out beneath your feet,
There was no worthy to be seen
Who could with Ralph compete.

His eye was shrewd, his head was hard,
He owned a wrinkled smile,
Where Lostock folk could see a yard
King Ralph could see a mile.

A King—and yet he wore no crown
Except upon his hat,
And when he rode to wake or town
He wasn't sure of that!

A King—yet was he not too proud
To drink with Squire or Peasant,
Or pledge the smutty collier crowd
Within “The Dog and Pheasant.”

'Twas there he took the barley-brew,
All foaming o'er the brim,
And swallowed it without ado,
Until Death swallowed him.

There politics he did expound,
And eager listeners said
(When he had treated “brandies” round)
He had a “knowin' yed.”

There he condemned, in high debate
And long and loud oration,
Proposed reforms in Church or State
As “ruin for the nation.”

And then of old his wrath did swell
Against “the Poor Law New,”
Quoth he, “I’ll lay a rate mysel’
An’ keep the pauper crew !”

The rate was paid, he kept the poor,
His rations did not fail,
For when he had no bread in store
He made it up with ale.

No wonder, then, for many a year,
His friends to represent,
Churchwarden eke and Overseer
This doughty monarch went.

No wonder when the Princee was dead,
As Lostock gossips say,
They thought King Ralph would “haply” wed
With Queen Victoria.

But rumour here the truth outstept,
For still we saw him jog
To “little Hamlet,” where he kept
High revels at “The Dog.”

Old times are changed! Old friends have died
Who longed to “sup” a drop
Oft as they spied his donkey tied
Before that “Jerry shop.”

Where “Hamlet, royal Dane,” with Ralph
Caroused in parlour sandy,
And mixed more *spirit* with their laugh
Than *water* with their brandy.

Gay was the tale, but it is told!
Their laughter, but ‘tis o'er!
Another master owns “the Fold,”
“Ralph-fold” is Ralph's no more.

A bigger landlord rules “The Dog,”
Still famed for “din and stir,”
And mixes milder “goes of grog”
For meaner customer.

And churlish fingers grip the glass
That *he* was wont to swill,
And churlish legs bestride his ass,
If she be going still.

For lo! a king of mightier power
Has brought our monarch down,
But no successor to this hour
Presumes to claim his crown.

.
Where does the old man sleep? Look round,
Beneath yon grass-grown “braid”
Within Westhoughton Chapel-ground
His royal dust is laid.

And Houghton folk are fain to tell
What thousands came to bring
The tribute of a last farewell
To Lostock’s worthy king;

Quoth they, “Now he is dead and gone,
And all his foibles o’er,
Owd Ralph he was the gradeliest men
That Lostock ever bore.”

THE MEMORIAL CARD OF THE KING
O' LOSTOCK.

BOTH high and low
Alike must go
When Death appeareth at the door;
And thou, old friend,
Hast met thine end,
The King o' Lostock breathes no more.
But far and wide
The country side
Laments to hear that tolling bell;
And hastes to see
The last of thee,
So widely known and loved so well.
When kings go down,
Their vacant crown
Some heir-expectant soon inherits,
But none shall dare
Thy crown to wear,
For none can emulate thy merits.

THE VALE OF NANTEOS.¹

MIGHT one atone for patriot harp-strings broken
At Edward's stern command
By tuneful praise, in Saxon accents spoken
Of this fair Cambrian land,

Then foremost on its roll of song and glory
Nantéos should be writ,
Not for the sake of legendary story,
But for mere love of it.

Impervious shades! What wild luxuriant tresses
Of fern and ivy twine
Their wanton coils about your wildernesses,
And round this heart of mine.

Vale of the Nightingale! Though now no longer
She flutes the amorous tune
That in these leafy coverts waxes stronger
When May is marrying June.

¹ So called from the nightingale.

"Tis Autumn, yet we scarcely miss thy voicing,
O truant Philomel,
So eloquent a brooklet flows rejoicing
Adown the listening dell;

An artful stream that hides her beauty, plashing
Through depths of laurel shade,
Till, like a fleck of light, behold her flashing
In yonder white cascade.

Thus onward to the gleaming lake she floweth,
Where neck of feathery snow
Floats stately, and a sister shadow showeth
Inverted down below.

Dark foliage overhangs, and upland meadow,
With hillocks round and high,
That interchange alternate light and shadow
As fleecy clouds flit by.
• • • • •
Ho! neighbour of a week, was thy home pillow
Molested by a ghost?
Did dread or anguish drive thee to the billow
On this secluded coast?

No Lethe murmurs where the hoarse Atlantic
Repeats one sullen chime,
No Lotus blooms on yonder Keep, romantic
Memorial of crime.

Seek southward o'er the Bridge of Aberystwith
This Dryad-haunted glen,
Where sweet Content, Egeria-like, keeps tryst with
Her lovers among men.

So haunting cares that hitherward pursue thee
Shall fling away their rod,
And Nature's calm maternal pleadings woo thee
To rest thy soul in God.

FAIR ROSAMOND.

Rosa mundi non Rosa munda.

“THE Dagger or the Poison bowl!
The grace of choice is thine, no more;”
Such deadly malice moved the soul

Of injured Eleanore!

Show mercy, Queen, for thou art strong,
Bid yonder trembling suppliant live,
'Tis human to avenge thy wrong,

'Twere Christ-like to forgive.

Child of poetic line, and fed
On honeydew of old romauts,
Whose maiden meditation sped

Thro' Pity's tenderest haunts,
Recall those happy childish years
When gay Trouvère, with melting strain,
Unsealed thy fount of virgin tears

In sunny Aquitaine.

Fair Queen of Love at Masque and Tilt
At Louis' Court, on Eastern shore,
Hast *thou* no conscious load of guilt?

Bethink thee, Eleanore.

Ah, cruel flames of jealousy
Have scorched all melting memories up;
She proffers with relentless eye

The poignard or the cup!

O Rose of late so gay and bright,
O sweetest "Rose in all the world,"
Frail Rose, with what corroding blight

Thy tender leaves are curled.

Within thy native garden-plot
Where lovebirds wooed thee all day long,
Thy virgin buds without one spot

Unfolded to their song;

Till one who answered sigh for sigh,
Caressing with a purple wing,
Inveigled thee to climb too high

And twine around a King.

Poor faded Rose, sweet thrall of Love,
Who bloomed amiss, then paled and died;

Perchance she found the grace above
Her rival here denied.

“ Mere nursery myth,” the Critic sneers,
“ Your murdered Rose a refuge won
“ At Godstowe, flourished twenty years,
Then died a portly Nun ! ”
Thou pitiless iconoclast,
Must all our childhood’s heroines fail,
All dear delusions of the Past
Lie scorched to ashes pale
In that fierce focus critics fling
Concentred on each ancient Lay,
Till dim mysterious shadowing
And soft lights melt away ?
Thus have I seen with keen regret,
From Alpine upland, peaks that glow,
As if descending Angels set
Rose chaplets on their snow,
Of sunset glamour disarrayed
Exchange their roseate hue for grey,

And all the mountain pageant fade

By slow degrees away.

Till carmine blush and orange streak

And gleaming snows had vanished all,

Nor westering ray survived to break

The circumambient pall.

Adieu, beliefs of happy youth!

Things distant are not what they seem,

This ruthless crucible of truth

Resolves them to a Dream.

And yet that nursery ballad beat

Such tragic music on the brain,

That oft in Fancy's grove I meet

Those rival Queens again.

One kneeling pleads with sobbing breath

And streaming eyes and claspèd hands,

The other stern and cold as Death

With bowl and dagger stands.

THE SEVEN SISTERS; OR, THE
ABERYSTWITH KNITTERS.

PRAY tell me, Maidens, what you be,
Who look like English “misses,”
Yet rival Greek Penelope
The spouse of great Ulysses.

I watched you by the Cambrian shore;
(Suppress your indignation)
No “suitor” I, although I bore
You high in admiration.

No opening grace of form or face
My interest was enlisting;
But—rarer sight—your needles bright
Long webs of worsted twisting!

I saw you stand, I heard you talk,
I often passed you sitting,
By twos and threes observed you walk—
But you were always knitting.

And though I might not see you sit
At tea or dinner table,
I felt convinced that you would knit
As long as you were able;

And when at night you calmly slept,
Fatigued by breeze and billows,
That eight-and-twenty needles kept
Their places 'neath your pillows.

Then dreams (suppose you freely sup)
Displayed no ghosts or witches,
But "letting down" and "taking up"
Interminable stitches.

On "Constitution-hill" so steep
You made a neat appearance,
And sometimes at "the Castle-keep"
With changeful perseverance,

Till one too ready to accuse
For trifling deviation,
Might blame you for your change of *views*
But not of *occupation*.

MERRY AND WISE.

Upon "the Drag," all snugly packed
 Behind four horses prancing,
And then below the "Cataract"
 I saw your needles glancing.

Until at length, against my will,
 The sea and sea-maids quitting,
One parting look beheld you still
 All bathing and all knitting.

O sisters seven surcharg'd with leaven
 Of patience unremitting!
O growing piles, O length'ning miles
 Of weary, weary knitting!

An awful thought occurs unsought,
 Kind Heav'n be your preserver,
Should you excite the deadly spite
 And envy of Minerva!

For if the classic tale be true,
 Arachne, who defied her
In needlework, like one of you,
 She turned into a spider.

Such keen anxiety I feel:

 But now, if not high treason,
I ask the cause of so much zeal—
 Stop! let me guess the reason.

Methinks you haste, ere Winter blows,

 To clothe “evicted” Paddies,
Or deal out more becomin’ hose
 To bare-legg’d Highland laddies;

And after shielding British pegs,
 Hibernian, Caledonian,
The rest you destine for the legs
 Of giant Patagonian.

No? Then I’ll try, dear Dorcasses,
 To find some other fair use.

Perhaps you’re knitting mufletees
 For hundred-hand Briareus?

But if our Lemprière we trust,
 That very useful *carver*,
With all his hundred hands, is dust
 Or molten into lava!

And if beneath Mount Etna laid,
As by the poets written,
His temperature requires no aid
Of muffetee or mitten.

But one more guess ! Your own trousseaux
Inspire this occupation ;
Young women to *great lengths* will go
In bridal preparation !

But though 'tis true, as minstrels sing,
Life partners should be fitted
For nuptial bliss by carrying
Twin hearts *together knitted*.

No frugal husband could endure
The burden of a marriage
Which cost him on his wedding tour
Such sums for extra carriage.

Besides, douaniers would make
A ludicrous exposure,
And sneering fellow-tourists take
The bridegroom for a hosier.

May no such contretemps ensue,
No matter what his trade is:
And now in bowing my adieux,
Most diligent young ladies,

I praise you for your well-spent time.
Whereof *my waste* is shocking
In using on a saucy rhyme
Enough *to knit a stocking.*

THE NUPTIAL SONG OF CATULLUS.

YOUTHS.

"Tis the signal long waited for: Comrades, arise!
For Evening is lighting the lamps of the skies,
Arise from the banquet: we tarry too long;
The Bride is at hand and the bridal song:
 Hymen, O Hymenæe !
 Sing Hymen, O Hymenæe !

MAIDENS.

See the youths! And we maidens must rise with
them,
For Hesper is showing his sparkling gem
O'er the eastern hill: it is so indeed;
So the youths have leapt to their feet with speed,
They have leapt to their feet with a purpose in
view,
They will carol a song, and a brave song too.
 Hymen, O Hymenæe !
 Sing Hymen, O Hymenæe !

YOUTHS.

Twill be no easy matter this prize to gain: . . .
See, the maidens are practising: not in vain
Such care to their musical task they bring,
They have doubtless a notable song to sing.
No wonder! For when they prepared their part
They worked at the business with all their heart.
But for us, if we ever rehearsed our lays,
Our minds and our voices went different ways.
We shall therefore be vanquish'd for all our sins
And justly, for Diligence always wins.
But at least let us now clip Fancy's wing
And apply our minds to the songs we sing.
Our rivals begin the alternate lay,
'Tis for us to answer as best we may.

Hymen, O Hymenæe!

Sing Hymen, O Hymenæe!

MAIDENS.

O Hesper, who drivest yon fiery car,
Does the firmament harbour a *crueller* star?

O, how canst thou tear from her mother's arms
A virgin daughter with modest charms,
Though she clings to that mother with wild alarms;
And deliver the maid, with averted face,
To a passionate bridegroom's strange embrace ?
Could outrage more barbarous ever be done
By an insolent foe if the town were won ?

Hymen, O Hymenæe,
Sing Hymen, O Hymenæe !

YOUTHS.

O Hesper, who guidest yon glittering car,
Does the firmament foster a *sweeter* star ?
Whose office it is to complete in truth
The plighted betrothal of maid and youth.
For suitors and parents may pledge their till,
No nuptial knot can be woven till
Thy torch has illumined the bridal bower--
What blessing can equal that happy hour ?

Hymen, O Hymenæe,
Sing Hymen, O Hymenæe !

MAIDENS.

This Hesper, O sisters, with lawless hand
Has carried off one from our virgin band !
'Tis well that the watch doth his rising mark,
For thieves ever lurk under cover of dark.
You may alter the name, but are bound to confess
That your "lovers" are robbers, nevertheless.

Hymen, O Hymenæe,
Sing Hymen, O Hymenæe !

YOUTHS.

O list to these maids, and their scolding plaint,
But what if this chiding be all a feint ?
If in secret soul, though their words breathe ire,
This star they malign be their heart's desire ?

Hymen, O Hymenæe,
Sing Hymen, O Hymenæe.

MAIDENS.

See the rose-bush in secret garden grown,
Unbruised by the plough, to the cattle unknown,
Which broadens in sunshine and burgeons in shower,'
And is fed by the breezes from hour to hour,

Till the youths all long for its odorous bloom,
And the maidens inhale its sweet perfume;
But mark when a finger has nipt its flow'r,
Neither youth nor maid will revisit the bower:
So the girl who cleaves to her virgin state
Is beloved like the rose-bush inviolate,
But as soon as the virgin becomes a bride
The youths and the maidens forsake her side.

Hymen, O Hymenæe,
Sing Hymen, O Hymenæe.

YOUTHS.

See the mateless vine in an open field,
Which can climb nowhither, no sweet grape yield,
But is bent to the ground, till her topmost shoot
Lies drooping and tangled about her root;
And the heifer avoids the shadeless spot,
And the heart of the farmer regards her not:
But suppose some hand, ere it prove too late,
Were to marry this vine to the elm her mate,
Then the cattle would rest in her grateful shade,
And the farmer rejoice in the fruit she made:

So the Virgin, whose heart is to Hymen cold,
Lives lonely and waxes untimely old;
But if in her prime she becomes a wife,
A husband's affection endears her life,
And her father himself will at times confess,
He dislikes his married daughter less!¹
Then struggle no longer thy hand to tear,
Young bride, from the clasp of a youth so fair.
When a father and mother have given consent,
A dutiful daughter must needs relent.
For your virgin self is not yours alone,
One third is the fraction you justly own;
For a third was consigned to your mother's care,
And a third is your father's rightful share;
To majorities render submission due,
Your *one* must give place to your parents' *two*;
And they have transferred, with the bridal dower,
Their several rights to the Bridegroom's power.

Hymen, O Hymenæe,
Sing Hymen, O Hymenæe.

¹ *Sic!* “Minus est invisa parenti.”—CAT.

THE DEDICATION OF CATULLUS' GALLEY.

Dedicatio Phaseli.

THAT Galley, guests, which ye behold,
Boasts to have skimmed the wave of old
The swiftest of all craft afloat,
And unsurpass'd by any boat
Impelled by canvas or by oar ;
Citing the Adriatic shore,
The islands that Ægean grace,
Historic Rhodes, or barbarous Thrace,
Propontis, or the rough recess
Of Euxine, as her witnesses.
There yonder Galley, once a wood,
Arrayed in rustling foliage stood,
And whispered many a silvan story
On that Cytorian promontory.
These things (quoth she) were fully known
To thee, Amastris, Pontic town,
And breezes chant the story still,
Cytorus, on thy box-clad hill ;

For here from tenderest saplinghood
On thy bold mountain peak she stood;
She first baptised her flashing row
Of oar blades in thy bay below,
And bore her trusting owner hence
Through leagues of “fretting impotence,”
And nought cared she, tho’ wind might turn
From west to east or blow astern.
But never vow in peril made
To seacoast deity she paid,
Till, bidding her last sea adieu,
She reached my lake of limpid blue.
So now, her youthful ventures o'er,
In peace, on this sequester'd shore,
She seeks the tutelage to win
Of Castor and his Brother-twin.

9 Feb 1861
WOMAN'S FAITH.

De inconstantia feminæ Amoris

My Lesbia vows she'd marry me,
Her fond and constant lover,
Tho' free to choose from all this world,
And all the worlds above her.

I never contradict my dear,
She vows whate'er she pleases,
But woman's faith is writ on waves
And ever-shifting breezes.

TO LESBLIA'S SPARROW.

SPARROW, my darling's darling,
With whom 'tis her dear way
To toy and play:
Whom in her tender bosom
She eageth with delight;
To whom she yields her finger,
So slender, fair, to bite,
Tempting thy pointed bill
To peck its fill.

My sweetest-heart perceiving
On such disport intent
(However meant—
To soothe some secret grieving,
Or calm her passionate heart)
I long to share the part,
And, dallying thus with thee,
To dull the misery
Of love's increasing smart!

Ah! this to me were sweet,
As to that maiden fleet.

Too long unloved,
The golden apple proved.

THE SPARROW'S DEATH.

CATULLUS.

O VENUSSES and Cupids,
And each good-looking wight,
Bemoan my darling's sparrow,
My darling's dead delight;
Her own dark eyes, so true and clear,
My Lesbia scarcely held so dear.

Sweet bird, as she her mother,
He knew his mistress fair,
And nestling in her bosom,
Or hopping here and there;
For her alone he trilled his song,
And never left her all day long.

At last he flew to Orcus
On unreturning wings:
Now foul befall thee, Orcus,
For swallowing all fair things:
Alas, poor bird, since thou art dead,
My darling's eyes are swell'n and red!

DE ARRIO.

CATULLUS.

I.

HE played exasperating tricks,
 Thus to th' initial letter
Of "income" he would h prefix,
 And "ambush" fared no better.

II.

How wonderful he thought that speech,
 How deep th' impression made !
When at his voice's utmost reach
 He roar'd of "*hambuscade*."

III.

So spake his mother, I infer,
 His aunts and cousins so,
His grandsire and his grandmother,
 And all the Harry Co.

IV.

Ah! when they sent to Syrian shore
This mispronouncing pest,
Such accents harsh were heard no more,
And shuddering ears found rest.

V.

But soon the startling news prevail'd,
And spread from man to man,
Th' Ionian Sea o'er which he sail'd
Is now *H-ionian!*

CLEVELAND.

SEPT. 26, 1881.

BRAVE Garfield, England mourns thine end,
Not moved alone by kindred ties,
For in thy growing worth our eyes
Had learnt to greet a trusty friend.

O greatly good, and simply great,
In whom all manly virtues met,
Whose sternest frown was ever set
Against corruption in the State.

Who, scorning knaves and factious spite,
Wrought onward with a single mind
To dignify—not please mankind,
To crush the Wrong and crown the Right.

Who, when released from civic toil,
Wouldst gladly seek thy Cleveland farm,
Nor shame to bare a sinewy arm
To reap the corn and till the soil.

Or, changed to meditative mood,
With all a scholar's fond regard
Hold converse with the lyric bard
Who loved his Sabine farm and wood.

Among the purple clad of earth
Who posture on this crowded stage,
Statesman or Hero, Prince or Sage,
Could hardly dwarf thy signal worth!

On either shore not hard to find
The lofty aim, the Godlike speech,
The dauntless heart ; but who can reach
Thy grand simplicity of mind ?

Turn we to those severer times
When Roman souls with happy choice
Attuned their lives to Nature's voice
And echoed all her simple chimes.

Bid we Fabricius' shade arise—
The hand that grasped the wooden bowl,
The lofty brow, the unswerving soul
That scorn'd all lures with steadfast eyes.

Or Cincinnatus in his home
Content to don the rustic weed,
Yet ready at his country's need
To guide the destinies of Rome.

O promise fair! Is all laid low,
All shattered at a dastard's will,
This active mind for ever still?
Faith dares aver, "It is not so!"

A soul so candid, brave, and fair
Was never framed of mortal clay,
'Tis but the shell that knows decay,
Thy genius seeks an "ampler air";

Though ruin mar the fleshly mask,
Refin'd by pain and patient toil
It disentwines its "mortal coil,"
And soars to some diviner task.

We fail to mark its upward flight,
Constrained to join the long array
That winds up yonder shrouded way
To Cleveland and the last sad rite.

KING COPHETUA THE ELDER.

A CLASSICAL BALLAD.

BENEATH a palm she found a seat.

The river gave her smile for smile,
And bathed her little ivory feet
And slender ankles in the Nile.

I' faith a winsome sight was this!

Of all the pretty maids that be
The circling sun might never kiss
A prettier maid than Rhodope.

By chance an eagle fierce and proud
Came flying over land and sea,
And stooping from a golden cloud
Looked down on lovely Rhodope.

Then, uttering a scream of joy,
He seized her little slipper bright—
A dainty silken, pearly toy,
And bore it swiftly out of sight.

The King he sat in robe and crown,
 Around him stood a glittering band,
When lo ! an eagle swooping down
 Had placed a slipper in his hand.

He kissed it oncee, he kissed it twicee,
 “Sweet slipper, sweeter foot !” quoth he,
“Go, find it, slaves !” And in a trice
 They brought bewitching Rhodope.

One little foot was sandalled fair
 In pearly slipper as was fit,
The other little foot was bare,
 No pearl on earth could equal it !

The courtiers sing, “Long live the King,
 “But not without a Queen.” quoth he,
Then gave his crown and everything
 To pretty little Rhodope.

THE HEAVY-HEARTED LIGHTERMAN.

I.

A GENTLEMAN from Westminster
Cries, "Boatman, launch thy wherry,
And I'll give thee a shilling fee
To row me o'er to Surrey."

II.

He was a stalworth Lighterman,
But while he sculled along,
Twas plain to trace upon his face
The signs of something wrong:
His light grey eye was overcast,
His brow with frowns encrusted,
Like Lighterman with heavier heart
Excessively disgusted.

III.

"Unfold to me, my honest man,
The trouble on your mind,

Here's one will help you all he can
A remedy to find :
At any rate your ease to state
Will leave you more resigned."

IV.

He sighed and said, " Such wrongs are mine
Unknown to 'bus or cab,
My hist'ry, though the day is fine,
May make me 'catch a crab,'
Which if I do I hope that you
Will mind what you're about,
For if you go to tumble in
The deuce may pull you out."

V.

"Good Lighterman, you're not polite,
But I will be particular,
While you explain your sorry plight,
To keep my perpendicular.
I think you won't turn out to be
The man to drown your fare ;

But should you practise tricks on me
 You'll go before the Mayor."

VI.

Says he, "I never yet was lagged
 For insult or for battery,
 They mostly call me 'Civil Jim,'
 My proper name is Slattery:
 I've paddled here this twenty year,
 And in the parts surrounding,
 And never drownded anyone,
 But saved 'a sight'¹ from 'drownding.'

VII.

"I saved the owner of a yacht;
 That was a thankless job,
 For all my risk I only got
 One solitary 'bob.'²

VIII.

"Then near Queenhithe I chanc'd to see
 A boatman's drowning wife,

¹ *Vulgo* for "multitude." ² *Vulgo* for "shilling."

By desperate dive I rescued she,
 And saved another life.
 Her sons look'd on and help'd me not,
 Her grinning spouse likewise,
 And when 'I ax'd for summat hot,'¹
 They 'imprecates my eyes!'²
 Ses they, 'A glass o' grog? Not we!
 We'd stand "a go" all round
 To let the blooming baggage be,
 And leave her there to drownd.'

IX.

"And next I saved a fireman's boy
 (The little rascal ought-ter³
 Feel more desire to die by fire
 Than suffocate in water):
 But when I grasped his curly wool,
 The mud it was so stout,
 That two more boats were forc'd to pull
 Before we tow'd him out.

¹ *Vulgo* for "I asked for something hot."

² Vulgissimè et Euphemismè ~~ter~~

³ Colloquial termination = ought to.

X.

“ And then I saved a landlady,
The party’s name was Brown,
Full fourteen precious ‘stun’ weighed she
If she would weigh a poun’.
And then an Upper Thames Street lout
Fell in the other day,
I had the luck to haul him out:
For these I got no pay.

XI.

“ I rescued several printer lads
At divers times and seasons,
Who all felt bound theirselves to drownd
For sundry private reasons.
Can you suppose me saving those
And positively getting
Nor mite nor jot for all the lot
Except a mighty wetting?

XII.

“ Them printer lads! It seems to me
A mystery confounding

Why they should take at such a rate
To suicide by drownding;
Maybe the stink of printer's ink,
Or foreman's words uncivil,
Make all these numerous *inkers sink*,
Or is't the printer's devil?

XIII.

"I've heard of him—it may be true!
'That's neither here nor there;'
But what compels them all to do
The business at my stair?
For be the river smooth or rough
I 'follers them' in-course,
Which needs a constitution tough
As any cabby's horse.

XIV.

"My latest 'go' was Charles Ducrow:
I dragged him from the river,
And down he sank upon the bank
To whimper and to shiver.

Says I, ‘Old man, if you have got
Sich suicidal manners,
Why must you choose the special spot
Where I looks out for “tanners?”’¹
I set him straight at any rate,
So me and old Ducrow
Were took before the magistrate,
Sir Sydney Waterlow.

XV.

“ In language pithy and concise
I told him all my woes,
And oncee or twice he wiped his eyes
And blew his jolly nose.
Then hand he pops into his box,
And taking shillings five,
Hands them to me whose gallantry
Had saved Ducrow alive.

XVI.

“ Then he advised me to apply
To the R’yle Humane Society,

¹ Tanners=sixpences. Derivation uncertain.

For more reward. Says he, 'Cause why
 You are a notoriety,
And without flam or flattery
 The Public is your debtor,
So go you, gallant Slattery,
 And carry this here letter.'

XVII.

"I put the letter in my hat
 And made a civil bow,
Though Fortune's been against me flat,
 Says I, she's for me now;
Then steers to the Society
 They call the R'yle Humane,
I reckon 'twill be long enough
 Ere I 'apply' again.

XVIII.

For there I saw a 'writer chap,'
 He was a 'stiffish swell,'
Quoth he, 'Good Mr What's-your-name
 You did your duty well,

If fourteen days and nights within
 You made this application
There might have been “a sight of tin”
 For your remuneration.
No further time can I afford,
 You should have come before,
But “Virtue is its own reward,”
 Now go—and shut the door.’

XIX.

“If I had only been a dog
 The public press would saint me,
And ‘gemmen give me lots o’ prog,’
 And Edwin Landseer paint me.
But no man cares a rusty nail
 About a Lighterman;
I wishes I could grow a tail—
 And be a Newfoundlan’.

XX.

“Yes, Virtue is its own reward,
 To think so I am willing,

Since hauling fourteen souls aboard
Has earned me eighteen shilling!

XXI.

' The British Public (I should hope)
That every whiner sucks
Will raise enough to buy me soap
And wash these muddy 'ducks.'
If not, on river or ashore,
While boats with oars are row'd,
I'll never save a creature more,
If I do—'¹

EXTRACT FROM "THE STANDARD," ABOUT 1868.

THE ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY.—An old man, named *Charles Ducrow*, was brought before Sir Sydney H. Waterlow, after several remands, charged with attempting to commit suicide by walking into the river, near the City Flour Mills.

¹ Righteous indignation probably marr'd the last verse. The Editor supposes he meant to conclude with some such words as "My name is not Slattery," but fails to see how they can fit into the rhyme or metre, and so is obliged to leave the line unfinished.

It appeared that the prisoner's mind had evidently been deranged when he attempted to destroy himself, but by kind treatment he had become much more calm and sensible of the crime he had committed. Letters had been written to the country where he thought some members of his family lived, but they could not be found. Sir Sydney Waterlow now thought the prisoner was sufficiently recovered to be sent to the union, which would, if expedient, pass him to his parish.

At one of the examinations a lighterman named Slattery, who had rescued the prisoner in an insensible condition at the hazard of his own life, applied to Sir Sydney H. Waterlow for some remuneration for his loss of time.

Mr Martin, the chief clerk, said the applicant was a most deserving man, and had been instrumental in saving several lives, some of the cases having come to this court.

Sir Sydney H. Waterlow said he regretted there was no fund in the court out of which he could remunerate him as he deserved for his gallant and courageous conduct. All that he could do was to give him 5s. from the poor-box as some compensation for his loss of time. He advised Slattery to make application to the Royal Humane Society, which was supported by the public purposely for rewarding those who saved the lives of others from drowning. He asked the man whether he had ever received any reward for what he had done?

Slattery said—Oh yes, he had. He saved the life of the owner of a yacht at Blackwall, for which he received one shilling. He saved the life of the wife of a lighterman at Queenhithe, while her husband and two sons looked on and said, "Let her drown." For that he received no reward. He saved a fireman's boy at Waterloo Bridge, and after getting him out of the water he stuck so tight in the mud that two

boats had to come and get him out. For that he got no reward. He saved another boy at Southwark Bridge, for which he got no reward. He rescued a lodging-house keeper, of Field Lane, named Brown, and a woman about fourteen stone weight who attempted to commit suicide at Paul's Wharf, and for his loss of time the sitting alderman at Guildhall gave him 10s. He rescued a boy living in Upper Thames Street, for which he got no reward. Besides these cases he had saved about six or seven printers' boys at Paul's Wharf, who, during their dinner hour, amused themselves by jumping from barge to barge, and frequently fell between them. The last life he had saved was that of the prisoner, Charles Ducrow.

Sir Sydney H. Waterlow thought this was just such a case as the Royal Humane Society would give a reward to, and he would give him a letter to the secretary, drawing his attention to it.

Slattery took the letter, and now stated that he had seen the secretary, laid the above list before him, and was told by him that the society could do nothing because he had not made his application within fourteen days.

Sir Sydney H. Waterlow said he was sorry to hear it, but he could do nothing more in the matter. He thought when a magistrate drew his attention to such a case the secretary would have paid attention to it. However, he was grieved to see such gallant conduct ignored by a society receiving subscriptions from the public for the express purpose of rewarding such noble deeds.

THE TWO SINGERS.

When the grass falls before the scythe the nightingale sings no more.—*Common Saying.*

I.

NIGHTINGALE, sing night and day!
Keep thy gurgling flute in tune,
All too brief that plaintive lay,
Born in May,
It dies with dying June.

II.

For observant rustics tell,
While the lark still carols blithe,
Thou wilt utter, Philomel,
Sad farewell,
Struck dumb before the scythe.

III.

Dearest treasures earliest pass,
So with us, and so with thee,

Lover of the springing grass,
Soon, alas !
'Twill fall, and thou will flee.

IV.

Ah, the heart that cleaves to earth
Soon the whetted scythe must hear,
Shaking even at its birth
Tuneful mirth
With agony of fear.

V.

Falls and fades the meadow bloom,
Then the heart's sweet music lies
Buried in some voiceless tomb,
And in gloom
Her wasted summer dies.

VI.

Happier soul that upward springs,
Like the lark with joy elate,
Sunshine glistening on her wings,
While she sings
Brave songs "at Heaven's gate."

VII.

Though beneath her on the plain
Blade nor bloom the mower spare,
No sad minor tones of pain
Cloud her strain,
Yet she had treasure there.

C A M I L L A.

FATIGUED by modern Belles in town,
In country, and suburban villa,
I take my old school Virgil down
And read the story of Camilla.

An exile king, to mountain lair
Retreating, bears his infant daughter
Her nurture—all a father's care,
Her lore—the forest craft he taught her :
With tiny hand she bends the bow,
Around her tender waist a quiver,
And on her cheeks the purple glow
That happiness and freedom give her.

She wears no bodice silken-laced,
No clouds of Tyrian dye enfold her,
But tigress skin in savage taste
Depending from an ivory shoulder ;

No gold confines her raven hair,
The dear delight of mountain breezes,
It floats untrammelled on the air
Or hangs as happy Nature pleases.

Twin buskins guard her fairy feet
From cruel flint and frosty weather,
Their tread so delicately fleet
As scarce to bend the blooming heather;
And roaming thus a huntress-child,
Like Dian's younger, fairer sister,
No game however strong or wild
In all the woodland could resist her.

At sweet sixteen Camilla won
Such peerless fame of budding beauty
That many a mother urged her son
To lure the child from filial duty;
But when some youth of courtly grace,
Accosted her with lover's greeting,
She shook her arrows in his face,
And clapt her hands at his retreating.

So dear to her those forest glades
With virgin liberty to range them,
Her mountains with their wild cascades—
She *could* not for a palace change them.
And so she kept (example rare!)
In pulchro corpore mens sana)
For aged father all her care,
And all her kisses for Diana.

SING A SONG OF SIXPENCE.

A NURSERY RHYME RATIONALISED FOR THE LITTLE
MEN AND WOMEN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

HE *sang his song* from door to door,
He smiled and touched his hat;
Some threw a shilling on the floor,
And many *half of that*.

When hunger seized him as he sped
His tuneful trade to ply,
From *pocket full* he munched his bread
Of oats or rather *rye*.

But when he came to palace grand
And warbled at the door,
The *King* and *Queen* of all the land
Cried, “Minstrel, roam no more.”

It came to pass, as gossips tell,
But not the reason why,

(Perhaps because he piped so well)

They gave him *blackbird pie*.

The King he carved with merry words

Befitting such a king,

“Lo, here are *five-and-twenty* birds,

But only *one* can sing.”

The *Queen* produced her *honey pot*,

(This was her secret joy),

And with the sweetest she had got

Regaled that lucky boy.

The King sat *counting* out his gold

(This was his little fad);

He grasped as much as hand could hold

And gave it to the lad.

The *maid* was in the garden-plot

A *hanging out the clothes*;

It was her heart she lost, and not

Her *pretty little nose*.

MY RIVER.

A SONG DESCRIPTIVE OF A PICTURE.

RADIANT River,

In whose current sway and quiver
Snow-white blossom, purple mountain,

Yellow primrose, reed, and bent,
And the deeply mirror'd azure

Of the sunny firmament;

Sweetest of all joys, and sweeter
On thy flow'ry marge to meet her,

Meet her here,

My love, my dear,

Like a glowing Naiad wearing
River lilies round her head,
Septeewise a bulrush bearing

From her river-bed.

Hence! avaunt! O working bee,
Croak, thou frog, no prophecy,

Treacherous spider, flee!

Toil and trouble,

Dealing double,

Away! Away!
Come not near my love and me!
Fairy stream,
Sunset gleam,
Stay, O stay, stay!

“DUX FEMINA FACTA.”

AN EMANCIPATION ODE, TO BE SUNG BY TREBLES ONLY.

A.D. 1893.

O MARK the day that lifts our ban
With raiment white and braided tresses,
Too long we groaned the slaves of man,
Henceforth we are electoresses;
But only vote, however pressed,
On principles of “pure selection,”
And the “survival of the best”
In face and figure and complexion.

In vain the *ugly* Tory prates,
The Radical *ungainly* proses,
We scorn to favour candidates
With lanthorn jaws or crooked noses;
But when Apollo Belvideres
Our “vote and interest solicit,”

By canvass, eloquence, and cheers
We'll bring them in, we cannot miss it.

The female vote by slow degrees
Will weed the benches of St Stephen,
Till every member (if you please)
Shows Grecian nose and dentals even.
What follows? O ye golden years!
O free and glorious British nation!
Lo! womankind M.P. appears
Sole mistress of the situation.

Behold a novel introduction:
Our charming selves will grace the centre,
And idiot howling and "obstruction"
Subside and vanish as we enter.
They "bate" our husbands "by the powers,"
So strong their brass, their voices stronger,
But when they match their tongues with ours
They'll soon discover which is longer.

We'll tighten many a screw that's loose,
Curb ministerial wits that wander,

And teach mankind that “sauce for goose”
Is likewise proper “sauce for gander”;
We’ll minimise the income tax,
Cheer the bucolic heart with plenty,
And pile all burdens on the backs
Of bachelors turned eight-and-twenty.

Deceased-wives’-sister bills! How great
The nuisance of those annual bothers!
But *we* will then retaliate,
And pre-engage our husbands’ brothers!
The widow’s pension! Immature
We deem that Georgian¹ invention,
We can improve it, and secure
A second husband *plus the pension.*

The coinage shall be decimal,
To soften arithmetic rigours,
For though our shapes are perfect all,
We are not over-good at figures.

¹ “The widow’s pension” was suggested by Mr Henry George, author of *Progress and Poverty*.

Long may Victoria's image be
Displayed our British coin and flag on,
But Hereules and Omphale
Shall supersede the George and Dragon.

'Tis six years since the Jubilee—
To us a grateful jubilation—
What won our earliest victory ?
A maiden Queen's determination ;
Her tiny royal foot went down,
And forced Sir Robert to surrender ;
That is a diamond in her crown !
Long live Victoria ! Heav'n defend her !

"To love, to cherish, and *obey*,"
That vow was framed by men : no matter !
When rearranged in woman's way
The bridegroom shall repeat the latter ;
And when an olive branch appears,
Papa shall sit at home and rock it,
While we enjoy ourselves, my dears,
A little latch-key in our pocket !

We won't forget the usual snub,
Returning later than expected,
But talk about the ladies' club,
Where "ladies only" are elected ;
We hold the rod, we will not spare,
Revenge shall take the place of mercy,
Man's turn will come to grin and bear
In those brave days of *vice versa*.

Dame Partlet—see her rule the roost,
And in the chickyard peck and jump it,
And luckless chanticleer reduced
To crow as small as penny trumpet ;
Sharp beaks have we when men refuse
To mend their tempers and their manners,
Bring friends to lunch with muddy shoes,
And take to "brandies" and havannas.

The stronger now must to the wall,
The muscular obey the feeble,
In life's duet the bass sing small,
And octaves higher shrill the treble ;

Enough of tears and abject life,
Enough of husbands' jealous fury ;
Point out the brute who beats a wife,
We'll hang him *sine* judge or jury !

ODE TO APHRODITE.

SAPPHO.

GODDESS of th' enamelled throne,

Zeus' fair and guileful child,
Queen immortal, see thine own

Vext, insulted, and reviled :

But if thou scorn

My love forlorn

Ah ! thou wilt slay me, mother mild !

Hasten hither : my request

Often won thine ear of old ;
When I sought thee, heart-distrest,

Scarce my blushing tale I told,

Ere thou wouldst speed

With loving heed

To quit thy father's halls of gold.

Gladly thou wouldst yoke thy car,

Drawn by sparrows swift and fair ;

Gladly I beheld afar
Dark wings whirling thro' the air;
Till to my side
I saw them glide,
And leave their lovely mistress there.

Lips immortal smiled on me,
Lips and eyes and forehead smiled;
And a voice caressingly
Questioning, "What anguish wild,
What passion throes"
(Saidst thou) "are those
That drew me hither, O my child ?

"Whence conceived that throbning heart
Love's mad fever-dream so strong?
Lo, I steep the suasive dart;
This shall hit the mark ere long:
Love's artful net
Is ready-set;
Say, Sappho, who hath done thee wrong?

“Flies he with aversion swift?
He shall shortly follow thee:
Dares he scorn thy graceful gift?
He shall proffer on his knee.
Thy love shall all
His soul enthrall,
And coldness change to ecstasy

Prithee, Goddess, hear me still,
Come as thou wert wont of yore;
All my heart desires fulfil,
Loose its bondage, heal its sore:
Appear, appear,
O mistress dear,
To help thy votary yet once more.

TO THE BELOVED.

SAPPHO.

I.

GODLIKE I deem that lover's pleasure
Who lies enamoured at thy feet,
Whose ear imbibes in thrilling measure
Thy whispered tones and laughter sweet.

II.

Ah me! my heart begins to flutter
At sight of thee, beyond control,
Then neither throat nor tongue can utter
The passion that consumes my soul.

III.

Forthwith the fire of love careering
Insidious thro' and thro' me strays;
My eyes are sightless, and my hearing
Like buzzing bees in summer days

IV.

Cold dews adown my limbs are streaming,
I tremble all from feet to head,
My lips are blanched; to outward seeming,
Breath fails me—I am almost dead.

THE SAME IN ENGLISH SAPPHICS.

Ah, how my heart tumultuously tender
Fluttered within or ever I beheld thee,
Utterance failed, and powerless my tongue lay
Tied with emotion.

Swiftly love's soft fire circulated through me,
Objects surrounding faded from my vision,
Murmuring sounds were buzzing in my ears like
Swarms of Hymettus.

Chilly damps trickled down me in abundance,
Feeble limbs failed me tremulous, my cheek was
Paler than ashes, breathless I was plainly
Close upon dying.

THE RATTLE-TRAP; OR, THE ADVENTURES
OF A PHAETON.

BY BLACK AND *BLUE*.

FOR thirty sovs I bought a trap,
'Twas plain enough to please a quaker,
But ought to have been called a *Brake*,
Or I might even say a *Breaker*.

Ah, had I known what strokes of fate
Would fall on me through that tormentor
I would have placed (ere yet too late)
A blazing torch beneath her centre.

But when she trundled out as gay
As varnish and blue paint could make her,
We dreamt not of the evil day,
And frequent bills of Mr Baker.

How shall I tell the tale of woe?
Alas, no cries of "Wo!" could stop her,

Her evil genius urged her so
“To run a muck” and “Come a cropper!”¹

A wheel rolled off; she broke her box;
Then lost her lamps (may Darkness take her);
Her dash-board turned smash-board with knocks
(I hold the bills of Mr Baker!)

And yet was not the trap alone
Responsible for all this jobbin’,
The guiltiest “party” was a roan
Named “*Pet*,” forsooth; *we* called him “Dobbin.”

He broke the trap, he broke his leg;
Then gave himself a final cobbin’
By kicking on the driving peg,
Which put a stop to Signor “Dobbin.”

But ere he kicked that treacherous fork,
And doomed himself for life to rue it,
Upon the trap he did his work
As neatly as two heels could do it—

¹ See slang of the period.

He smashed her axle, snapped her shaft,
Her under parts received a stover,
She split in front, she splintered aft,
Then turned deliberately over.

Succeeded him a briskish nag,
In spite of years his legs were limber,
His name was "Thomas"—but the wag
Played scurvy tricks with trams and timber.

Of course his shying broke the trap,
And shortly we were forced to send her,
Disabled by a fresh mishap,
To any maker who would mend her.

For hitherto in dismal plight
She dragged herself to Mr Baker,
But now he loathed her very sight,
And vow'd he would not undertake her.

So *vice* "Thomas," in due course,
Came number Three, whose legs were thicker;
Ah, trust him not, the heavier horse
Is like to prove the heavier kicker.

Says I, "Now listen, poor old chap,
They tell me that your name is 'Charley,'
If you go gently in my trap
I'll feed you well on oats and barley."

So "Charley" took me at my word,
And shuffled on with gentle action,
I whipped: to whip him was absurd,
The creature did not care a fraction.

He never broke my trap—not he,
But broke my *patience* and my *temper*;
His pace had no variety,
Two miles per hour, *et idem semper*.

He owned a swollen hock, a cough,
A broken hoof (no smith could mend him),
So in disgust I sent him off,
And feared the kennel soon must end him.

Since that I bought a little mare,
Well bred and gentle, fast and pretty;
Her age is neither here nor there,
But if you ask her name, 'tis "Kitty,"

And she will neither shy nor bolt,
But ah, when “Kitty’s” pace increases,
I apprehend at every jolt
My “pony-chay” will shake to pieces.

It makes such music as it goes,
Groanings and squeaks and creaks it mingles,
It roars and wheezes, puffs and blows,
It rings and rattles, snaps and jingles.

I start at each alarming snap,
And think some vital part is parting;
So when I drive this “rattle-trap”
I don't arrive—I'm always starting.

TO THE PENINSULAR SIRMIO.¹

FROM CATULLUS.

SIRMIO, gem of peninsulars and islands,
All that are anywhere girt by either Neptune,²
Limn'd in the liquid transparency of lakelet,
Washed by the circling infinity of ocean;
Ah, with what joy and contentment come I hither,
Scarcely believing myself to have abandon'd
Thynia and plains of Bithynia for ever,
Scarcely believing in safety I behold thee!
What can be sweeter than this emancipation,
When the soul care-stricken lays aside its burden,
When from a far land the traveller returning,
Weary of wandering, sitteth by his own hearth,
Resteth his limbs on the bed so often longed for?
Here is the one worthy meed of all my labours.
Bless thee, fair Sirmio: bid thy master welcome:
Welcome me, Lydian lake with smiling ripples
Welcome me, laugh, all things capable of laughter.

¹ Sirmio, now Gesenzano, at the foot of L. di Garda.

² Neptunus uterque = salt water or fresh.

THE FARMER'S HARVEST SONG.

Nil desperandum.

COME out, my men, with mirthful cheer,
And leave all sluggards sleeping;
Hark, 'tis the call of chanticleer,
And the harvest is worth the reaping.
The sun is afield, let us up and away;
For, comrades all, my advice is
To work with a will, and hope some day
Kind Heav'n may better the prices.

Come out, come out, my mowers true,
And whet your scythes with a rattle,
These *oats* are not for "the like of you,"
But Christians care for their cattle;
Right pleasant it is to stand behind
One's palfrey willing and able,
And hear him crunch with a satisfied grind
His gallon of oats in the stable.

Come out, come out, my harvesters true,
And warm to your reaping early,
Not “a peck o’ maut” can “Willie brew”
Till we shave the bearded *barley*:.
“The barley brew” will make folk glad
When winter snow looks dreary,
And a tankard of nut-brown ale may be had
To comfort the souls of the weary.

Come out, come out, my merry men all,
With bag and bottle and ration,
These golden clusters of *wheat* must fall
To feed a famishing nation:
For wheaten bread is the staff of life,
We are bound together about it,
Nor peer nor peasant nor man nor wife
Can thrive and be happy without it.

But let your blades with their rustling sweep
Through the falling ears remind you
Of the harvester Time, who comes to reap
With his silent scythe behind you.

In Heav'n's broad field grow strong and straight,
Increase in faith and reason,
That you may be borne to the Golden Gate,
“ Like shocks of Corn in their Season.”

A SUNDAY EVENING AT TENBY.

I.

WE climb the Crag of Castlehill,
Whence the Good Prince looks down
In marble likeness calm and still
On little Tenby Town;
And strolling round the grassy height
We hoped, between our talk,
Some curious or some lovely sight
Might mark our Evening walk.

II.

The Bay was lit by sunset sheen,
And crossed by shadows fine
In shifting belts of emerald green
And deepest iodine:
It rained, but could we heed the shower
When o'er the clouded Heaven
We saw a bannered Rainbow tower
And flaunt its colours seven?

III.

And lo! beneath a new delight—
Reflecting ray for ray,
A fairy causeway haleyon bright
Lay bridged across the Bay;
Then pictured forth in fainter dye
(As copies wont to be)
The Bow was doubled on the sky
The Bowstring on the sea.

IV.

They fade—they fall; but ere the Bay
Quite lost its brilliant hue,
Behold the Porpoises at play—
A rolling, plunging crew;
With flashing fin they lithely pass
And lash their tails behind,
Or gambol in a wallowing mass
Of monsters intertwined.

V.

“Say, Fishers, why ye man the boat
Safe moored beside the Pier:

Whence so much haste to get afloat
With heaps of netted gear?
And wherefore this long eager watch
Beside the shallows set?
Methinks ye scarcely care to catch
A Porpoise in your net.

VI.

“Nay, Master, let the creatures roll
And tumble while they may,
They tell their tale! There is a shoal
Of Mackerel in the Bay!”
So fishing on the tide-swept sand
They plied their craft right well,
And counted, when they rowed to land,
One thousand Mackerel!!

VII.

”Twas thus we chanced that Sunday night,
Dear daughter mine, to gain
Three spectacles that charmed our sight
Upon the watery plain;

And, Agnes, you could scarcely tell
Which most of all did please,
The Rainbows or the Mackerel,
Or the sportive Porpoises.

VIII.

The Strange—the Beautiful we sought
So richly crowned our search!
And yet perhaps—un-“happy thought”—
We’d better been at Church.

THE SKYLARK.

A FABLE.

A LARK who had suffered from spoliation,
And rejoiced in an airy situation,
Impatient at length at a home so low,
Endangered by ev'ry marauding foe,
Flew up and away with a carol loud
And built a snug nest in the cleft of a cloud.
Ah, then how happy "that child of air"
In the pleasant prospect she found up there!
One bright little eye looked thankfully down,
As she brooded her five little eggs so brown,
On the fields and the forests that lay below
And harboured the robbers she feared not now!
That cruel cat with the stealthy tread
Could not rifle the sweets of her nursery bed;
No blundering cow with a careless hoof
To crush in the sedge of her sacred roof;
No boisterous puppy with instincts game
Would harass her home and her fledglings maim;

No bristling hedgehog abroad on his luck
Could seize all her dear little eggs to suck ;
And, worse than puppy, cow, hedgehog and cat,
(It still made her nervous to think of that),
No urchin was here in full holiday swing
To fasten her little ones' legs to a string.
O fortunate lark ! " What a lark," sang she,
And she warbled as happy as happy could be.
But the other bright eye glanced eagerly through
To examine the realms of etherial blue ;
Ah, there it encountered a gruesome sight.
And her poor little heart beat aloud with fright !
From the North crept up an enormous Bear
With seven great eyes to goggle and stare ;
A Scorpion appeared with a sting in his tail ;
And Aquarius overhead carried a pail,
So carelessly swung it might well upset
And deluge her darlings with heavy wet ;
And the Man-in-the-Moon, from a nearer view,
Presented a visage of ghastly hue,
While his nondescript dog and his buudle of sticks
Reminded her strangely of *lunatics*.

Then Cassiopæa arose from her chair,
And the sudden movement gave her a scare ;
And on either side, with a fiendish grin,
Expressive of eggs, stood a terrible Twin ;
And Cancer came waddling all on one side,
First snapping his claws, and then stretching them
wide ;

And a horrible Lion began to roar
And ramp, which frightened her more and more.
But what she dreaded far worse than the Lion,
Or the flashing and clashing blade of Orion,
Was the silver braid of a subtle net
Which the Pleiads “*of malice prepense*” had set.

And last of all Sagittarius came
And bent his bow with deliberate aim
To demolish all larks and their nests with a
stroke.

So she fluttered and screamed, and in screaming
awoke,

And plumed her pinions with joy when she found
She had dreamed a safe dream in her nest on the
ground.

MORAL.

So, all you little people discontented with your station,

Take warning by this Lark and her imagined elevation,

Be patient in your low estate, and bravely bear its trouble;

If you change it for a higher—*that* may chance to bring you double.

S N O W.

MARCH 22, 1885.

FATHER SOL looks down
With a tearful frown
On a white shroud spread below :
For Winter has made
A nocturnal raid,
And his nurslings are buried in snow.

Old Greybeard march'd back,
And his dusty sack
Stifles all the sweet voices of Spring ;
We may listen in vain
For the nightingale's strain
In the pines where she useth to sing.

Symbolical this
Of our transient bliss
And of hopes that just blossom and fade ;

Ah, how verdant and bright,
But they pass in a night
As if 'whelm'd by a snowy cascade.

Yet the vigour of Hope
Is as able to cope
With Misfortune, as sunshine with snow :
It may fall in chill showers,
It may cover Spring flowers,
But it won't last for ever, we know !

THE GLADSOME LITTLE BOY.

(*NOT BY DR WATTS.*)

WHENE'ER I take my walks abroad

How many poor I see !

Whene'er I view my own abode

How snug it seems to be :

I am so glad such pleasant lines

Have fallen unto me !

Nurse tells me many common boys

Are fed on pork and beans,

And as for turtle and champagne

They know not what it means :

I'm glad to say that every day

We feast like kings and queens.

Papa and I drove out hard by,

We passed a ragged child ;

But I was dressed in winter best,

With furs and velvet piled :

He had no dad ! I felt so glad,

And looked at mine and smiled.

That night my sire, before the fire,
Informed me on his knee
That few were rich, and many poor,
And poor must always be:
“Papa,” said I, “I’m glad you’re rich ;”
“And so am I,” said he.

A B A N D O N E D.

“SEND me!” undaunted Gordon cried, when England
sought a man
To bear a heavy burden in the deserts of
Soudan:—
His was a brow that would not blench before the
Arab spear,
A soul that feared his God above, and knew no
other fear,
A heart that answered, throb for throb, to every
human need,
And scorned all passions that do wrong, of hate or
lust or greed,
A life that would be freely giv’n his brother men
to save,
A body well content to rest in Egypt’s dreariest
grave:
He heard his country’s urgent need, it fired his
noble breast,

Our hero, so we named him *then*, obeyed her high
behest,

And riding on his desert track, designed with
hopeful smile

To plant the Tree of Liberty upon the banks of
Nile.

His mission failed: he brought no peace no freedom
to Soudan,

It failed, for jarring feuds at home marred all his
prudent plan.

At last intrench'd in palace lone, dark foemen
gathering fast,

Provisions wasting, every day more hopeless than
the last,

No news from home, and (as they said) cut off
from human aid

By fiery sun and scorching sand and hostile
ambuscade,

He stood at bay, like antlered stag which treach'rous
hounds assail,

But treachery could not cloud his faith or make
his spirit quail,

He fell: and then three days too late the laggard
aid drew nigh,
The Gordon had been true to death, and England
bade him die!

A SUNSET IN THE SOUDAN.

GRANDLY beneath his robe of fiery cloud
Now sleeps the sunken sun;
So rests our warrior in his crimson shroud,
His latest battle won.

The sun “new spangled” at the call of morn
Will brighter beams display,
So he from unknown grave will rise newborn
When shadows flee away.

Sublime the welcome that awaits the brave,
The martyr’s guerdon then,
Who life and “all save honour” freely gave
To save his fellow-men.

SOUP OR FISHES.

A FAMISHING Johnian mischancing to hit
On a poor country inn for refreshment unfit,
Was informed that the hostess no dinner had got,
Save carp from the pond and pea soup from the
pot:

At least, he exclaimed, these unsavoury dishes
Will help me to illustrate “Plane superficies.”¹

¹ Plain soup or fishes.

FROM MARTIAL.

Vitam quæ faciunt beatiorem, etc.

DEAR Martial, here are things which if possest
Would render human life more richly blest:
Wealth without labour, heritage by birth,
A thankful farm, the old ancestral hearth;
No law suits, few of clothes; a mind at ease;
Good constitution; freedom from disease;
Simplicity and Prudence; equal friends
Whose easy conversation makes amends
For artless dishes; nights without excess,
Yet bright with never-failing cheerfulness;
A happy marriage, and yet chaste withal;
Sound sleep which makes the hours of darkness
small;
No greedy craving, no repining sigh,
No dread of death, yet no desire to die.

COOK V. GAZE.

“SAY, shall I go to Cook,” he asked,

“Or shall I go to Gaze?”

That must depend, my tourist friend,

Upon your whims and ways,

And if your pleasures continental

Be sensuous or sentimental.

When I indulged my foreign craze,

Coupons from both I took,

Trusted when travelling to Gaze,

When dining turned to Cook.

RISUS ET LACRYMÆ.

PARVULUS et nudus, connixâ matre, jacebas;
Caetera tunc risit, le lacrymante, domus;
Sic vive, ut moriens aliis sis causa doloris
Omnibus, at risus ludat in ore tuo.

S T C H A D.

FROM his high niche in Stafford town,
On tory, liberal, or “rad,”
With changeless aspect looketh down
 The image of St Chad.

His better hand a crosier bears
The good to bless, to ban the bad,
But neither smile nor anger wears
 The visage of St Chad.

Indifferent to artistic praise,
Disdainful of each gibing ead,
In stormy as in sunny days
 Stands weatherproof St Chad.

What ! on the mediæval list,
By fast and vigil worn and sad,
Suspected for a “ritualist”—
 Nay, self-condemned, St Chad.

In lawless vestment habited,
In lawless alb, stole, cassock clad,
A lawless mitre on thy head,
Yet undismayed, St Chad !

If some Aggrieved Parishioner, backed
By kindred spirits popery-mad,
Enforced the Public Worship Act,
Short shrift for thee, St Chad !

With hangman's rope around their throat,
If Austin, Jerome, Gregory had,¹
Meet usage for Iscariot—
What hope for thee, St Chad ?

O stern, unthrobbing heart of stone,
Secured by triple rocky pad,
Would I might make thy calm my own,
And learn to gaze, St Chad,

¹ An allusion to the profane iconoclasm at Bristol.

Adown life's long and busy street,
Above each novel craze or "fad,"
Each blatant cry, each patent cheat,
Intent like thee, St Chad,

By work and worship, ere the chimes
Ring out life's little day, to add
One warder more in evil times
At th' Old Church Porch, St Chad.

E P I G R A M.

THE EXASPERATED BARD TO THE "IRRESPONSIBLE
REVIEWER."

COME, Critic, turn and turn about!
Pen just one little sonnet:
And when you bring *your* bantling out,
Oh! won't we "sit upon it."

THE SUNFLOWER.

A FABLE TO ILLUSTRATE THE POWER OF KINDNESS.

“το Φλέγρας πεδίον ἵνα οἱ θεοὶ τοὺς γηγενεῖς καθυπερηκοντισαν.”

ARISTOPHANES.

O'ER Phlegra's plain
Mid-air Apollo stood
And slew with flaming shafts
The climbing Titan brood
Grown bolder ;
And as he fought amain
His bow unerring twang'd,
And the golden quiver clang'd
On his shoulder.

The sons of Earth
Fell ponderous, and their fall
Crash'd like a tempest's mirth,
When cloud to cloud doth call
In bellowing thunder;

Then from their swollen veins
Rich torrents of hot blood
In crimson lakelets stood,
Or foam'd asunder.

Forthwith a Gem,
Born from Earth's vengeful breast,
Erect on spearlike stem,
Flaunting a brazen crest
O'er hill and hollow,
Flamed multitudinous,
And hasted to uphold
A visage round and bold
To affront Apollo!

So everywhere
Fierce faces glared at him,
Arrayed in golden hair
Circled with fiery rim,
All—sun-pretenders!
From root to apex bloom
The Titan sap was strong

To mock him all day long,
And ape his splendours.

Calm and serene
Each morn the god arose ;
Nor dart nor arrow keen
Launched he against his foes
For their subjection ;
But sunn'd them in his beams,
And render'd smile for frown,
Taming their hatred down
To fond affection.

Now a bright band,
Like bodyguard akin
To godlike chief, they stand
Yearning a glance to win
From him they follow ;
And as his car rolls on
With fixed adoring eyes
They all apotheosise
Victorious Apollo.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

A COMPARISON.

Mediocribus esse poetis
Non homines non Di non concessere columnae.
HORACE.

A POETASTER is my song
Who deems himself a gifted Poet,
And marvels in his heart how long
'Twill be before the world will know it.

I here produce a "Christmas tree"
Fell'd in the copse by woodman's hatchet;
Take Fancy's spectacles, and see
How nicely *his* "productions" match it.

'Tis fair to look at, neat and trim,
With head above us common people,
Leaf answers leaf, limb faces limb,
It moralises like a steeple.

Self-satisfied around *his* Tree
Behold our Poetaster stalking,
Its tame, unmeaning symmetry
He lauds in high artistic talking.

I grant those lines in level row
He duly counted on his fingers,
And yet throughout, from top to toe,
No gleam of grace or beauty lingers.

No drop of clear Castalian dew
The life poetic here infuses,
The stock on which his sapling grew
Was never nurtur'd by the Muses.

He hints "The work is scaree begun,
Our craving shall ere long be sated,
Wait till his masterpiece be done
Bedizen'd and illuminated."

So first he wires an orange in,
And next a bunch of tawdry spangles
Above gay flags and glittering tin,
Beneath bright crystal balls and bangles.

And lacquer'd pictures here and there
With golden eggs Deception hatches,
And jewels neither "rich" nor "rare,"
And brilliant stains of "purple patches."

Then ranged amidst this pot-pourri
From toyshop, grocer's, huckster's, draper's,
He lights to glorify his Tree
A crowd of variegated tapers.

And when at length the Thing appears
In pomp of borrow'd decoration,
By fools and girls of tender years
'Tis hailed with joyful acclamation.

Alas, those tapers must burn down,
Those shams be scorn for every scorner,
From foot to crown the Tree turn'd brown
Must rot unheeded in a corner.

'Tis but a rootless, sapless splint,
In which nor gods nor men find pleasure,
And ev'ry pretty gewgaw in't
Was pilfer'd from some neighbour's treasure.

Neglected Bard ! Meet spite with spite,
Denounce the carping crew for vandals,
Then in one holocaust ignite
The stem for torch, the boughs for candles !

THE EDELWEISSE.

IN MEMORY OF JEAN ANTOINE CARREL.

His last climb o'er, his duty done, he died
Of cold and hunger at the mountain's base,
Yielding to younger limbs the perilous place
So long his own of foremost Alpine guide.
Of all who chanced in Carrel to confide
Was never one who ear'd not at the end
To clasp his honest hand, to call him friend,
And hope once more to clamber at his side.

Ah, would that all who loudly claim to be
Guides for their brethren to sublimer thought,
And ampler air than Alpine summits know,
Were faithful, wise, and diligent as he—
As worthy of those blossoms pure and white
Of Edelweisse which deck his grave below.

A PARODY FROM DRYDEN.

Two Beings in two distant periods born,
The courts of Heav'n, the groves of Earth adorn :
The first excelled in majesty and grace,
The next in feeling heart and noble face.
Commanded then a *third* fair type to show,
The force of Nature could no farther go,
So mingling the angelic and the human
In just proportion, lo ! it fashion'd woman :
But since she rudely struggles to the fore,
The man remains, the angel is no more.

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